
EARLY DAYS IN PHEONIX, OREGON



by

MARJORIE NEILL HELMS

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P R E F A C E

THE Phoenix Community Club and Youth Center, wishing to make some permanent contribution to the community, sponsors this booklet, on the occasion of the centennial celebration at Phoenix, Oregon, June 26 and 27, 1954.

The history of Phoenix has been followed whenever possible through contemporary writing. Although the Indian wars were a big part of Rogue River valley life, space is not given to them here because the story has been so well and fully told in A. G. Walling's "History of Southern Oregon", 1884, in Frances Fuller Victor's "The Early Indian Wars of Oregon", 1894, and in "The Causes and Significance of the Modoc War", by Cadet Hugh Wilson Jr., published in 1953 by the Tulelake High School P.T.A.

In this booklet, the story ends in 1887, for in that year the railroad came, the towns that we know today were established and the early days were almost over.

Special thanks are due to Nellie Rose Jones (Mrs. Wilbur Jones) for having saved so long and so carefully the manuscript written for her by Orsen Stearns, her family records and letters, her own writings and for passing on to me the small, interesting things that were told to her by a generation that is gone.

The late Fletcher Linn helped check the veracity of old stories, and Mrs. Stella Anderson made available a copy of Hobart Taylor's diary so that life at old Camp Baker would not be forgotten.

Mrs. Josephine Holton Nickerson, a native daughter of Josephine County and the county's oldest living resident, loaned her scrapbooks of newspaper clippings. Over a long period of time, the Oregon Historical Society, at Portland, Oregon, has opened their old newspaper files to those engaged in research. The Ashland Tidings and the Klamath Falls Herald and News have cooperated in allowing their old files to be read and copied.

The hard-working centennial committee searched for and found the old time pictures that must round out any written history, and the generosity of everyone who let us copy their old, prized pictures is much appreciated. Many people bought advertising space and thereby helped make the publication of this history possible.

The Bancroft Library, at the University of California, gave permission to use a much-needed manuscript, and Martin Schmitt, at the Special Collections of the University of Oregon, has been the most helpful and encouraging of all.

Marjorie Neill Helms
Ardencraig
Grants Pass, Oregon



Welcome to Nineteenth
Century Phoenix Oregon

PHOENIX VARIETY STORE

Phoenix - - 1851-1887

In the very early days the Rogue River valley was a lovely place. People used to say that the grass grew so high you couldn't see a man coming on horse-back, and there were pleasant groves of trees for shade. There were deer in the forest, fish in the streams, and wild flowers everywhere. The hills looked blue and were solid with timber. It was beautiful and dangerous and full of Indians.

By 1851 a well-traveled trail led through the Rogue River valley from the Willamette to the California gold fields.

There are two written accounts of the valley in June of 1851. One is a diary that Major Phillip Kearney kept when he made the trip with a party of U.S. regulars from Vancouver to Benecia, California. The other is a paper called "Cardwell's Emigrant Company" that J. A. Cardwell wrote for Hubert Howe Bancroft and which is now at the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, California.

Major Kearney had been asked to look around for a better road than the one that followed the old Applegate Trail of 1846. He went slowly south with

Jesse Applegate as one of his guides. When word came to him of some fights with the Indians, he wrote in his diary: "Monday, June 9th 51 More noise of Ind. troubles—very many troubles with packs—coming from the mines."

He hurried to southern Oregon. Meanwhile the welcome news spread that the Indians were going to be wiped out and parties of men rushed from the Umpqua valley to help; Jesse Applegate found J. A. Cardwell with a mining party at Perkins' ferry on Rogue River and urged them all to volunteer.

Major Kearney engaged the Indians near Willow Springs, a battle which neither side won but in which Captain James Stewart was killed. Major Kearney wrote: "Tuesday, June 17th 1851 Captain Stewart killed—Myself nearly cut off—terrible on horses."

J. A. Cardwell described it: "Captain Stewart of U. S. army received a fatal wound in this fight that caused his death . . . he saw an indian laying in the grass wounded he was trying to get up and could not do so. The Indian had his back broke the Captain thought to ride up and finish him with his pistol the indian drew his bow and shot

an arrow striking him in the groin and ranging upward. When the arrow was pulled out the point was left in, which caused the Captain to die in about 24 hours."

That night Major Kearney made camp beside a stream at the place Phoenix is now. He called the camp after James Stewart, and the stream he named Stewart Creek, though it is now known as Bear Creek.

Cardwell wrote: "Capt Stuart was buried inside one of the tents and as little sign left of the grave as possible. His remains was not disturbed by the Indians but they were removed about 19 months afterwards and taken to the Eastern states."

An oak tree that once stood across the road from the Colver house in Phoenix is remembered to have had the initials J. S. carved on the trunk.

DAVID DILLEY'S MURDER AT PHOENIX

David Dilley was killed in May of 1851, and J. A. Cardwell wrote about it:

"... we moved up about one mile from Kearney's camp and camped at the place where a Gentleman by the Name of Dilley had been Killed about one month previous by the Indians. Mr. Dilley had a small pack train consisting of Eleven mules he had brought up from California with him, when he arrived at Yreka provisions was extremely high. he took his pack train of mules and went to Scottsburg after a load of flour. On his return at this camp, he had 2 hired men with him. too Indians came in to camp and wanted to stay over Night with Dilly and his men. they consented to let them stay one of the hired men was put on guard he went to sleep the other man and Dilly was both sleeping at the same time one of the Indians tuck up Dilleys gun and shot him with his own gun breaking his Neck the report of the gun woke both of the hired men, and they both of them ran away as fast as they could, leaving everything behind and came to Yreka as quick as they could get there on foot. Dilly was cou-

in to my partner in the mines. The Indians got away with all of the mules and the entire outfit except the flour. They ripped open the flour sacks and emptied them on the ground taking the sacks and through away the flour."

FIRST RESIDENT OF PHOENIX

At the end of 1851 there were twenty-six men living in the Rogue River valley. Sam Colver took up a Donation Land Claim where the town of Phoenix is now.

J. A. Cardwell returned to the valley. He wrote:

"Left Yreka A Bout the first of Jan 52 and came over to the place where Ash Land Now stands and took up that claim and mill site and went to work to build mill . . . There had already been treaty made, and Judge Skinner, the Indian agent was at that time in the valley . . . Shortly after we settled here the Jacksonville mines was discovered, and people began to come in fast. A few days there was plenty of White men in the valley for any emergencies that might take place."

Never-the-less, there was trouble with the Indians. In the spring of 1852, J. A. Cardwell decided to go for help. He wrote about it:

"I ran all the way to wagoner's creek, to the first house. found one man there. went on to the place where Colonerl Stone now owns. Jo Wilson, Jessy Adams, Jo and firm Andersons live there. I Met Sam Culver at that place. He was on horse back I told him how the Indians were acting. He asked me if I actually beleaved they ment hostilities to the whites. On my telling him I did, and requesting him to go after Judge Skinner, and oald Sam [Ko-ko-ha-wah, or Wealthy, or Sam, second chief of the Rogue River Tribe of Indians], who was stopping at that time with Agent Judge Skinner, he started immediatly and mad a quick trip. The Agent and oald tiee Sam and 3 of his Brothers, all came up shortly after I got back. There was a bout 15 White men, all together collected in. Skinner mad a short speech to Sam and then, Sam he gave a talk to the Indians. He had not spoke more than one or two

minuets when they began to break up, and start off in small parties. In a short time all had left that did not bee long there. We had no farther trouble with the Indians from that time which was in Feb 1852 untill July following."

In 1852 Sam Colver built a cabin on his claim and its location was across the present highway from the big Colver house that stands today in the town of Phoenix. His brother, Hiram, had a claim which joined his, though Hiram and their two families were staying at the time with relatives in Silverton, Oregon. Sam Colver left the valley himself later in the summer because he was appointed Indian Agent at Port Orford.

Before Sam Colver went to the coast he brought a hundred head of cattle to southern Oregon and left them on his place in the care of a hired man. Nobody knew much about the Oregon climate at that time and it was generally believed that cattle could get through any winter there without hay. As soon as the cattle reached the valley he was offered fifty cents a pound, but he held out for seventy five. Later on, during the deep snow of 1852-53 he might have got his price had he been there to sell. Sam Colver took twenty five cents for the few that managed to starve through til spring.

1853

Most of the Rogue River Valley residents were gold miners until 1853 when the farmers and the ministers came in. The famous "Preacher's Train" arrived in fifty three.

In August, one wagon train of emigrants arrived in the middle of some Indian trouble and had to fort up with Jacob Wagner on Wagner Creek, near the present town of Talent.

Jacob Wagner had his house in the middle of a clearing. Some of Captain Alden's men (from Yreka, California) had helped finish setting up the perpendicular logs in a square around the cabin. The four corners were put up higher than the rest and they swung wide, heavy gates at the front and at the back. Rough beds were built in all around the inside walls of the stockade,

with a passage between them and the house. Cooking was done outside over little fires among the wagons, unless the Indians were to make an attack and then the fireplace in Wagner's cabin would have been used for everybody.

Mary Hill (later Mrs. Patrick Dunn) fortified up there that August and with her went her cat, the first cat in all of southern Oregon.

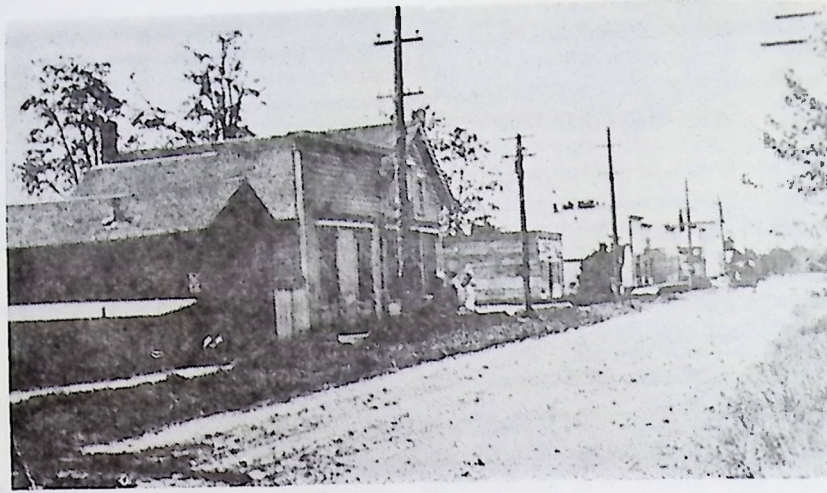
INDIAN WAR OF 1853

All during that hot summer of 1853 there was trouble between the settlers and the Indians. Agent Amrose A. Skinner had resigned to go into politics and the new Indian agent, Sam Colver, was not appointed until late in the summer. The treaty of fifty one had been written when the valley was only part of the emigrant road and trail to the California gold fields and it didn't cover the situation two years later when there were as many white people in the valley as Indians.

There were no regular troops in the Rogue River valley at that time, so law and order depended simply on anybody who wanted to enforce it. Even though several Indians were hanged at Jacksonville, white men continued to be found murdered on their claims and on the trail.

In August the settlers formed six volunteer companies and sent a messenger to Governor Curry for more men, guns, ammunition, and the howitzer. Captain Alden came over the Siskiyou from Fort Jones and took charge of the amateur army. He made headquarters at Camp Stewart (Kearney's old camp on the site of Phoenix) but before going out to attack the Indians he had to spend several days forming the necessary department of supply for the men and horses.

Then word came that the Indians had struck first. Ten houses had been burned in as many miles and the woods had been set afire. All the volunteers at Camp Stewart immediately went home to take their families to fortified farm houses and other places of safety. Then they went off on their own in angry little bands of two and three to "clean



LARRY'S LINE-UP SHOP—Phoenix

"Dusty in Summer"—

out the Indians." After several days Captain Alden got them all back.

General Joseph Lane commanded one battalion and General John Ross another. The Indians were led by Chief Jo, the most important and the most reasonable of all the chiefs.

Eventually the Indian camp was found and, after fighting all afternoon, General Lane talked the Indians into a truce and got them to agree to come to a treaty meeting.

In Jacksonville a lot of people blamed Lane for not fighting the Indians to a finish. Instead of wiping them out, it was feared he had let them live to fight another day.

TABLE ROCK TREATY OF 1853

Early on the morning of September 10, 1853, eleven white men went unarmed (except for one revolver and one long, sharp hunting knife) to meet the Indians and talk peace.

Those present were Joseph Lane, who could wind an Indian around his finger; Joel Palmer, Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Oregon; Sam Colver, newly appointed Indian Agent from Phoenix; Captain A. J. Smith, 1st dragoons, who later commanded Fort Lane; L. F. Mosher, Lane's son-in-law; John Ross, the

best Indian fighter in the whole Rogue River valley; J. W. Nesmith, the interpreter; Lieutenant A. V. Kautz, who had escorted the howitzer to southern Oregon; R. B. Metcalf, J. D. Mason, T. T. Tierney and seven hundred armed Rogue River Indians, in war paint and feathers.

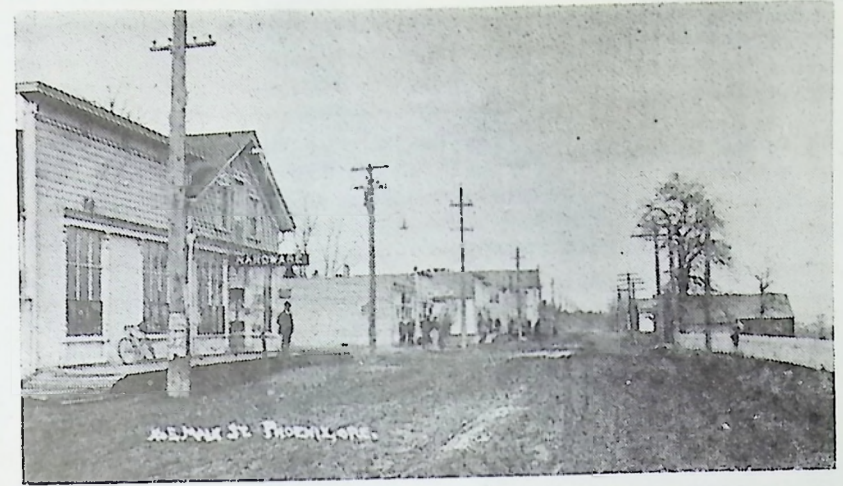
The treaty was signed and Fort Lane was built that fall. For the next two years there was peace.

EARLY DAYS IN PHOENIX

Orsen A. Stearns was for many years a close friend of the Colver family of Phoenix. In 1922 he wrote, for the Rose girls, a story that he called "Reminiscences of Pioneer Days and Early Settlers of Phoenix and Vicinity." Nellie Rose Jones, the grand daughter of Sam and Huldah Colver, took care of this handwritten manuscript until, in 1953, she gave it to the Special Collections at the Library of the University of Oregon.

Orsen Stearns begins:

"[I] was some two years behind the first settlers, was little more than ten years old when, in October 1853, [my] parents took up a donation land claim on Wagner Creek, [my] first knowledge of incidents and events connected with the early days commenced, that many



—Muddy in Winter" in 1875

PHOENIX FEED and SEED STORE

other people whose recollections have been printed and in some ways differ from those here recorded, it does not necessarily follow that either their statements are at fault, or that mine are the only true ones . . . It should not be forgotten that the writer does not claim infallibility in his reminiscences, but simply records here his remembrances.

"Rogue River valley was first settled in 1851. The first dwelling house was erected on Bear Creek about midway between what is now Central Point and Medford, by A. A. Skinner, who was earliest Indian agent appointed to take charge of the Rogue River Indians . . . Several other houses, scattered throughout the valley were built that same year among which was that of Samuel Colver on the site of Phoenix just across the road and a little south of Hiram Colver, both these claims including land lying along Bear Creek.

"Believe there had been a few small fields of grain and vegetable gardens raised in 1852, but am not sure of that. When my father's family came in, in October 1853, it was difficult to obtain seed wheat at \$10 per bushel and everything else was correspondingly high.

"My father traded Jacob Wagner a two horse wagon worth \$200 for 100 hills of potatoes and dug them him-

self. Flour was selling for \$33 per hundred and the sacks would stand alone after the flour was emptied out, the flour having been packed across the coast mountains from Scottsburg during the rainy season, uncovered, until wet in from one half to two inches in depth which hardened into stiff dough and moulded. All kinds of groceries were scarce and very high. The sugar we could get came in fifty pound mats [Chinese mats instead of barrels], and it was more like sand as it was an ashy grey color and full of all kinds of filth. It was made in China, with the usual contempt for cleanliness that was characteristic of the coolie. My mother understood how to refine the sugar after which it resembled nice clean maple sugar, but was reduced in weight fully one fourth in the process. For coffee, parched corn, peas, and sometimes carrots and parsnips were used. Some people used browned bread crumbs making what was termed crust coffee.

"The merchants in those days carried but little clothing except miners supplies and people had to resort to picking up castaway clothing from the streets of Jacksonville, where it was the custom of the miners and gamblers to throw their old or soiled clothing after purchasing new, and a large part of their castaway garments were simply soiled, and, after washing, were nearly

as good as new. As no children's clothing or footwear was obtainable, nor material for making them, the mothers of families were forced to make the clothing for their own children's wear.

"My father made lasts for the footwear of all the family except for himself and my mother made shoes for the family, the uppers from castaway boots picked up on the streets of Jacksonville in front of the stores, the soles made from harness or saddle leathers picked up here and there. All flour sacks were carefully washed and used to make underwear, pillow cases, sheets, etc.

"On account of the high prices and poor quality of the flour, potatoes and squashes were added to make it go farther, and often the adulterant was a perceptible improvement to the quality of the bread. A few wild plums were to be had along the streams, and elderberries were plentiful. They were used largely both as sauces, pies and dried for winter use, while some made a very fine wine of them for use in case of sickness. [Note: Wild gooseberries were also found along Bear Creek, but they got wormy in the 80's and were gradually all grubbed out.]

"After the harvest of 1854, the amount of flour from outside was largely supplemented by boiled wheat, the coarse meal made by grinding wheat or corn in large coffee mills bought for that purpose. As wild game was plentiful, and, after the first winter, beef was plentiful and of excellent quality, the fare of the settlers was much improved.

"There is a diversity of opinion as to the building of the first sawmill. I have always been of the impression that the sawmill on Wagner Creek, built by Granville Naylor, and Lockwood Little, and a doctor, was the first, and that of Milton Lindley at Gasburg [Phoenix] second, but some claim that the sawmill built by the Emery brothers at Ashland was first. However, all three of these mills were erected very early and were running in 1854. Neither of them could saw much more in a day than two good whip sawyers. They used to claim they could either of them saw from 500 to 1000 feet in twenty four hours, and they were always behind in

their orders. The early settlers had to split or hew puncheon for their floors, doors and other parts requiring lumber for their house construction.

"Most of the early houses were built of round logs with the bark on; some were hewn on the inside, a very few on both sides. All were chinked by putting in split pieces of shingle or shake bolts, and plastered over with mud. Chimneys and fireplaces built of rough stone with split slats and mud for chimneys. Windows were very rare except for a hole cut through the logs and covered by cloth, usually an empty flour sack. Many of the first cabins had earthen floors, some rough slabs from mills, with the sawed side up and the edges trimmed to fit by an axe."

SCHOOLS

Orsen Stearns had this to say: "The first school house was built by the settlers near what is now Talent. It was of rough logs with cloth covered windows on two sides. Its floor was of slabs, benches of slabs with legs of round sticks inserted in auger holes, no backs. The desks were simply rough plank tables.

"It was erected on Bear Creek about one fourth of a mile from the farm of Jacob Wagner. There being no school districts yet established, it was started as a subscription school and the name of Eden given to the school. The first teacher was Miss Mary Hoffman [later Mrs. George Vinning] and her school consisted of the children of the surrounding country for several miles in every direction, many of the pupils being older than the teacher.

"The school books consisted of books brought across the plains from nearly a dozen different states, and were so varied as were the pupils. Scarcely any two families had the same series of school books, and the organizing of the classes was a very difficult matter. Reading, writing and arithmetic were about all the branches taught.

"Believe I can give a correct roll of the scholars who ranged in age from seven to twenty three years of age. They were Welborn Beeson; Joseph, Samuel, John and Robert Robison; Os-

Education in 1888:
Two Thousand Dollar
Phoenix School



HOME APPLIANCE,
Medford

car, Orsen, Newell and Theresa Stearns; Thomas, Martha, and James Reames; Martha, Abigail, Donna, Hiram and Solon Colver [Hiram Colver's children]; Elizabeth and Nancy Anderson; Calvin Wagner; Mary, Nancy and Joseph Scott; Mary, Robert, Daniel, John and William Grey, and Lewellyn Colver [Sam Colver's son]. And I am not sure but there were two or three others.

"Lew Colver was then about seven years old, and rode to school on a little white pony. The teacher [Mary Hoffman] was a good disciplinarian, and, though very pleasant and sociable outside school hours, was quite strict in enforcement of discipline, almost entirely by moral suasion. At intermission she joked and laughed with the other girls as though one of them. I remember an instance where she had received a love letter written entirely in jargon which she and the other girls were immensely tickled over but which she was very careful not to let the other girls see the signature.

[Note: Jargon was Chinook Indian jargon, the language used between the

Indians and the white people all over the northwest. Until the 1880's, every one in southern Oregon could talk jargon.]

"There were, during the next four years, four other terms of three months each taught in the log school house, though the attendance was never very large, nearly all the older pupils dropping out.

"The Rev. John Grey was the next teacher and a more thoroughly disliked pedagog it was never my misfortune to attend. He always rode to school on an old bay mare with his children, five in number, trailing along behind him, or driven in front of him. On reaching the schoolhouse he would dismount, unsaddle, and give his steed into the charge of one of his boys with instruction to 'take her down near the creek and stake her out where there was good grass.' He would take his saddle and sheepskin blanket and spread it on his stool and there he would remain nearly the entire day, making all pupils and classes come up to his throne to recite their lessons, and woe to the laggard in

recitation or who failed in any way to please him, for he generally kept a heavy ruler by his side which he frequently used. He was particularly severe with his son John, who was the twin of William. John was in looks the image of his father, being dark and with very black hair and eyes, with the furtive look of a hunted animal. He could never recite his lessons through fear of his father who would scowl at him fiercely when he came up to recite, and upon the slightest mistake would hit him on the side of his head with the book he happened to have in his hand, knocking him to one side, then hitting him on the other side and frequently continuing the performance until he was tired out.

"Henry Church was the third teacher. He was a tuberculous person and of a variable disposition. Quite capable, but his unfortunate disposition prevented him from having that esteem and confidence of his pupils that is necessary for success in teaching.

"A Mr. Reddick was the fourth teacher. He was a bachelor who had located a homestead just southeast of the Rockafellow place on Bear Creek. He did not amount to much as a teacher.

"A Mr. McCauley was the fifth and last teacher who held the position of tutor to the Edenites. He was a fairly good man, tolerably good teacher, who simply took up the vocation to fill up a jobless space in life and with no special desire to excel in the profession."

SCHOOL MOVES TO PHOENIX

"The school house in Gasburg [the Lindley school house] was built sometime in the late fifties. It stood about the same place now occupied by the Phoenix church. It was a lumber building, box and batton construction, I think, with fairly good home made furniture. It was about 18 by 32 feet in dimensions, and faced the east. It was lighted by three or four windows on the north and south sides.

"The first school taught there, to the best of my recollection, was by Orange Jacobs, and he taught several successive terms. Many of the pupils who at-

tended the Eden school, attended the Gasburg school, besides many others living down the valley.

"[The pupils were] Charlie Hoxie; Al Rose; Nettie Gore; Sarah Jane Arandale and a younger sister whose name I cannot recall; William Burns; William and Lucinda Williams; Doc and Wm. Griffin; George and Alec Gridley; John, James, Nancy Justies and another younger sister; Lucinda and Ben Davenport; Lucinda Low; William Belle, and a younger sister of the Hamlins. Several others whose names I cannot now recall were among Jacob's pupils at one or more times. I believe James Neil also attended one or more terms of this school. Lucinda Davenport married Orange Jacobs at the end of his first term.

"One incident that might have had a tragical ending occurred during the second term. The Griffin and Justies pupils lived on the west side several miles and frequently came and went away from school together. One morning upon reaching the school house a little before school time, we were astonished to see the elder Justies pacing before the schoolhouse with a cocked revolver in his hand, while Doc Griffin and a number of other pupils from the same neighborhood stood by listening to the old man's tirade against Griffin, in which he repeatedly threatened to blow Griffin's head off for kissing, or attempting to kiss, Nancy Justies on the way from school the previous day. O. Jacobs soon arrived and prevailed upon the old man to defer his war-like intentions to some other time and place."

SCHOOL AT COLVER HALL

"After Jacobs quit teaching and went to practicing law, a Professor John Rogers opened up school in the Colver Hall. He was a graduate and professor in Yale college, who left the East at the discovery of gold and had been drifting over the coast for a number of years and presume had about reached the bottom of his purse.

"His school was an immediate success, his method of teaching new and unique. He seemed to have a mastery of every science and had a method of his

own to classify and teach them. He encouraged studying out loud in school and elsewhere, claiming that pupils who were as absorbed in their studies as they should be would not be disturbed by the recitals of others.

"He encourage mass rehearsals and had the little scholars talking and quoting Latin phrases. Whenever there were visitors, and there were many, he would ask some of his younger scholars the Latin names of various animals and other objects, and would smile and rub his hands gleefully upon their giving the correct answers in chorus. Your mother [Isabel Colver], my sister [Minda Stearns] and one or two other girls were his prize repeaters, and he drilled them to perfection as performers. He encouraged his pupils to take up many advanced studies for which they had no preparatory knowledge, and he frequently changed from one study to another so that his pupils had a smattering of knowledge of many subjects rather than a thorough knowledge of a few.

"He was very punctilious and polite, and drilled his pupils in politeness. He even encourage school parties on occasions when there was no school, and gave them lessons in deportment, but always insisting on ending all parties as early as 12 midnight.

"He was quite religious, opening the school with prayer, when he insisted on bowed heads and closed eyes, his own being always open and watching vigilantly for any infraction of the rules of his pupils. His devotional exercises were taken standing and once in a while his voice would cease while his firm and rapid strides carried him to some part of the room when one would hear some noise, as of a person being lifted up and violently reseatd, when his steps returned and the invocation resumed in the place left off, without a perceptible change of voice and concluded in the usual manner.

"At times he would be very nervous and hard to please, as though under a strain—at other times full of smiles and good nature. He taught one full year's term and part of another, when his pupils gradually dwindled or until he had so few that he dismissed school entire-

ly. Soon after his school ended, the cause of his nervousness and instability was discovered in the garret just above the platform where his desk stood, to which a small trap door gave him easy access. There were found several empty whiskey bottles.

"It was also learned that in accustomed early morning ramblings he was wont to visit the store of McMannus [Pat McMannus, who later went to Yreka, California, and became a leading citizen]. McMannus always kept a barrel of whiskey on tap, and he gave the professor his morning invigorates under the pledge of silence. After the discovery of the bottles and the departure of the professor, McMannus told a joke on the professor. He had emptied one barrel of his liquor and removing it had placed in its place a barrel of very strong vinegar. He was out in his woodshed to get a load of wood to fill up his stove, and one day, leaving the professor standing by the fire, he came suddenly into the back door and saw the professor in the act of emptying a full glass of the supposedly whiskey down his throat. The choking and gagging that followed was terrible to see and hear, but could not restrain McMannus from a fit of laughter almost as paralyzing as the dose of vinegar to the professor. The latter, it seems, had been in the habit of helping himself to the liquor so temptingly displayed and had heard McMannus coming, and hastily drew and swallowed the liquor for fear of being caught in the act, not knowing of the change of barrels. McMannus said the professor looked like a dog caught sucking eggs.

"As my attendance at the first term of Professor Rogers' school was my last term of schooling, the names of succeeding teachers in Gasburg are only partially known. I think Mr. Burhans taught the next term there, and a Sylvester Rice, I think, taught one term."

WHO LIVED WHERE IN THE EARLY DAYS

Orsen Stearns recalled: "Most of the donation claims were taken up in 1853. A few, including the claims of Samuel and Hiram Colver, were taken up in 1851 and 1852.

"The Myer brothers located claims on east side of Bear Creek in 1853. Adjoining them on the north were the Rhinheart brothers, bachelors, David and Ezra, who were joined several years later by another brother.

"On the Myers south was a man by the name of Fisk, who later sold out and went to northern California.

"Below Fisk, on Bear Creek, were the two half sections of Woolen and White, also bachelors; on the north of Woolen were the two partnership claims of Peter Smith and Thrash, afterwards bought out by the Patterson family. Then between these claims and Bear Creek was the Wills claim, occupied for many years by William (Bill) Smith who jumped the claim of Wills when the latter was shot by the Indians in 1853, and who's brother contested for and finally obtained title thereto.

"Then there was the claim of a young bachelor who finally went to the Willamette valley and ran away with another man's wife down there, and lived thereafter on his farm and raised, together with a family already started, quite a family whose descendants, many of them, (all girls), still reside in the valley.

"Next was the claim of Henry Ammerman, of one half section, taken prior to 1853, extending from Bear Creek eastward nearly to the mountain, where a canyon of considerable extent ran up into the range, which was early occupied by a Norwegian family by the name of Canutesen.

"North of Ammerman, the two Oatman brothers took a half section each, as they were both men with families. Harrison B. and Harvey were their names, but they did not remain on their farms many years, as farming was too strenuous work for them, and they early moved to Gasburg, when Harrison started a second store there, and Harvey built a hotel which he ran in connection with a saloon and billiard hall. A stable across the road was for many years the stage barn for the Oregon and California stage company, and Oatman was host to the traveling public.

"Continuing the enumeration of early settlers down the valley northwest from

the Oatman claims, which adjoined the Samuel Colver place on the north, was a family by name of Quigley, whose place adjoined the high cliff of rocks to the east and gave the cliffs the name of Quigley Rocks, for many years. Then came Wm. Mathes, the Rev. John Grey, the Scott family, and a son-in-law whose name I do not now recall. The Pinkham brothers, Ed and Joe; the latter married Grey's eldest daughter, Mary, I think her name was. All these latter named people were located in a sort of group, north of the crossing of Bear Creek, the Grey and Scott children forming quite a percentage of the earlier schools. Randle was the name of Widow Scott's son-in-law. They lived there many years, and Randle, I believe, died there. He was a victim of Phthisic, I think they used to spell it. It is now called asthma.

"Having enumerated all the early settlers on the north of Bear Creek from the Myers place down as far as Wm. Mathes place, I will now return up to the Woolen south line and give the names of as many on the south and west side of the creek as I can recall.

"The first was an old bachelor by the name of Gingman who sold to O. Coolidge in 1861. Next (on the creek) two bachelors, one whose name I have forgotten, the other was one of the school teachers in the old log schoolhouse [Eden school], his name was Reddick.

"Then the claims of Wm. Albert and George Rockafellow, whose claims were in the south of the junction of Wagner and Bear Creeks; Jacob Wagner came next, who was supposed to be a partner of J. M. McCall, as they held down a half section of land, though bachelors for a number of years. McCall later giving away to James Thornton, who built upon and proved up on the south quarter section. Up Wagner Creek in order named, was John Beeson, John Robison, David Stearns, Lockwood Little, and Granville Naylor, who built the first sawmill thereabouts, if not in the entire valley. All these last named were located on Wagner Creek.

"To the west, extending to and embracing Anderson Creek, were first, James Downing on a creek flowing into Wagner Creek and named after the lo-



Industry: The Eagle Roller Mills, built near Ashland in 1858, ran day and night in harvest season.

GIER'S DRUG STORE, Phoenix ROGUE AMUSEMENT CO. (Coin operated amusement machines) Phoenix

cator of the claim. Then the Anderson brothers, E. K. (Joe), and Firman whose half sections extended from the John Beeson farm westward to the foothills.

"I will here state these lands were unsurveyed until 1854, and there was some confusion resulted in arranging the claims as originally taken to conform to the subsequent surveys. Owing to this confusion many claimants managed to smuggle in quite a lot of unclaimed lands and hold them until children of theirs became of age, when they took up the lands so smuggled and acquiring title thereto, retaining the same in the family.

"Adjoining the Anderson claim on the north and west was the claim of Woodford Reames, whose claim also touched the west line of Hiram Colver on the west. Then the claims of the Coleman brothers.

"Returning to Bear Creek and south of Hiram Colver's claim was the claim of two more bachelors. Nelson Smith and another bachelor who did not remain there and whose name I have forgotten. This is the place the county poor farm is now located [in 1922]. It was purchased from the donation claimants by James Ammerman some time about 1858 or 1859, and occupied by

him until his death in the seventies, I think, when his widow married Col. Stone, who had charge of the same until it was sold to the county I believe.

"Hiram Colver's house was just a little ways below on another knoll, later owned by a Mr. Harvey. There were just two houses between Gasburg and Wagner's up to 1855."

THE MILLS ON BEAR CREEK

Orsen Stearns said: "The grist mill was commenced in 1854, by S. M. Waite before the outbreak of the Indian war of 1855, and I think the sawmill of Milton Lindley was built about the same time. All that portion of Samuel Colver's farm west of the main road was then open pine timber with a scattering of oak and laurel trees. It was nice large saw timber and close by the mill. A few years sufficed to cut down all the saw timber, and the once while open forest soon became a forest of young pine and other trees, with a mass of rotting tree tops and limbs, the refuse of the wasteful method of logging when only the straight limbless bodies of the trees were used. I remember well that from 1858 to 1861 the young growth was only tall enough to par-

tially conceal the mass of waste tree trunks and limbs left by the loggers, and the very last term of school that I attended in the old school house that stood at or near the present church there used to be contest among the boys to see who could run and jump over the highest young pine."

SAM COLVER BUILDS A BIG HOUSE — 1855

Orsen Stearns continued the story: "About the time of the outbreak of the Indian War [The biggest and last of the Indian wars in the Rogue River valley] Sam Colver and John Davenport commenced to build the block house. They intended it to serve as a hotel and a store for general merchandise when completed, and also as a rendezvous for settlers during the Indian troubles."

Nellie Rose Jones, Sam Colver's grand daughter, says that the house was never used as a public inn because Huldah Colver said to her husband, "I'll be out in the kitchen doing all the work while you're out in front entertaining the guests." Although it became the headquarters for most of the social life of the community, and was referred to as "the block house", or "the Colver mansion", and often as "Colver Hall", it was not used for the purpose for which it was built until the 1920's, when it was briefly known as The Blue Flower Lodge.

But to get back to 1855 and Orsen Stearns: "It was sometime during the early autumn of 1855, that the Indians having met one quite serious defeat on the Rogue River had scattered out and were attacking settlements, that notices were sent out for all scattered settlers to concentrate at best available points for protection, as nearly all the able bodied young men were in the various military organizations pursuing the campaign against the Indians, leaving only men with families to hold the entire settlement against possible surprise attack. Most all families within a radius of six miles gathered at the site of the block house then under construction, making quite a village of tents and wagons. Many of the men engaged in the work on the block house

as Lindley's mill was busy sawing out the 14 x 14 timbers. We remained there several weeks, with many coming and going. Also, Mr. Waite had quite a force of men working on his mill, the sawmill being run night and day to furnish material for both mill and block house, and several new industries sprang up and there was quite a population."

THE TOWN GETS A NAME

"In the evening, after the day's work was over, there was usually a huge campfire burning in a central location, and all the young people and many of the old used to gather around the fire, sing songs, dance and tell stories till bedtime.

"Among all this concourse, while there were quite a number of young men and bachelors, there was only one young marriageable woman. Her name was Kate Clayton, who was employed by Mrs. Waite to help her cook for the men who were employed at the mill.

"She was a girl about twenty and one of the most fluent talkers I ever met. As every young girl fourteen years of age was then considered a young lady and usually had a dozen or more admirers, Miss Kate, from her position as almost sole attraction of that assembly, had every available male congregate in her immediate neighborhood. From her ability to carry on an animated conversation to half a dozen or more admirers at once, as well as her prompt and witty repartee, she had been given the name of 'gassy Kate'. The term 'gass' or 'gassy' being a recent slang for talkative, or, as the dictionary would define it, 'light, frivolous conversation'.

"One evening soon after our arrival in camp, the usual campfire company was gathered around the fire, Kate, as usual, in position of presiding Goddess, while gathered near her enrapt administration were her usual numerous admirers, among them Hobart Taylor, Dave Geiger, Jimmie Hayes, and Black (given name forgotten), who had a very decided lisp.

"One of the men, during a lull in the talk, casting his eyes around at the

multitude gathered and at the tents, remarked, 'I say, this is getting to be quite a town. We ought to give it a name.'

" 'I think tho, too,' said Black, 'I move we call it Gathville, after Gathy Kate.'

" 'Oh no,' said Hobart Taylor, 'that sounds too small and insignificant. I move we call it Gasburg. That sounds more important.'

" 'Second the motion for Gasburg', came a dozen or more at once, and Gasburg it became from thence forward for over twenty years.

"Soon after the Indian war was over, in 1855 or 1856, when a mail route was established between Portland and Sacramento, a post office was established in a small office across the street from the grist mill with S. M. Waite, postmaster, and he took his fire insurance plate 'Phoenix' as the name of the post office, but that did not serve as a name for the town for over a generation or more, and I have a very distinct recollection of all the above from actual personal knowledge."

INDIAN WAR

The biggest and last of the Rogue River Indian wars began on October 9, 1855 and ended in the late spring of 1856. Most of the Indians were taken away to a reservation on the coast. They were beaten and poor and miserable, all except Chief Sam, who learned to raise a garden and sell vegetables. There was never any more trouble with the Indians in the Rogue River valley after that, though many Phoenix men enlisted in the volunteer company that was raised in 1872 to fight the Modoc Indian war in the Klamath Lakes country. General E. R. S. Canby, shortly before he was shot under a flag of truce by the Modoc, Captain Jack, had spent a night at Colver Hall and had been lent one of Sam Colver's fine horses.

PHOENIX AFTER THE WAR AND THE FUN TO BE HAD

Orsen Stearns remembered Phoenix well during this post war period: "The village received no permanent increase as the result of the Indian scare, but



Agriculture: The John Roberts Place

MACKENZIE PHOENIX INSURANCE COMPANY

soon after the war was over the discovery of gold in the 49 and Davenport diggings gave it a start.

"The number of inhabitants of the village at the close of the Indian War in 1856 was approximately 75 or 80. There was a flouring mill owned by S. M. Waite, the sawmill of Milton Lindley at the extreme north end of the village, a carpenter and wagon shop by John Suter, later owned by Aspenwall, a tannery owned by Geiger Bros., David and Wm.—am not sure of the name of the last; a saddle and harness shop by Jimmy Hays and Joe Dies; a drug store by Dr. Colwell, a blacksmith shop by Milton Smith, and there may have been one or two more small industries.

"Grandpa Colver had come there with Grandma [Samuel Colver Senior and Rachel Curry Colver], in the meantime, and Grandpa had built a brick store which was rented to a Jew by the name

of Samuel Reddick, afterwards associated with another Jew, constituting the firm of Goldsmith and Reddick. About the time of the gold discovery, H. B. Oatman built another brick store, a part of which was occupied as a saloon and billiard hall. Several different parties kept store in it, and I think several restaurants sprang up, some of them of a very short life.

"During the years prior to the gold strike, the popular amusements consisted principally of dancing parties, held generally in the Oatman hotel, but occasionally in the Colver Hall, where also were held traveling shows and public gatherings of various kinds. There was organized a temperance society called "The Sons and Daughters of Temperance", which had quite a membership—from 54 to 59. Quite a large number of the young men and women belonged, especially young men of the steadier and better class, such as Geiger Bros., Jimmie Hays, Hobart Taylor and others.

"There was quite a number of young men who worked around at various businesses, who were quite active in all the amusements of the place. These men and the larger boys of the school used to play town ball—the predecessor of base ball—in the public road just south of the Colver house and barn, or between there and the brick store.

"Also we played 'prisoner's base', which developed many good runners. Among the most active of these men were the Bishop brothers, Dan and Wallace; Ad. Giddings; John Coleman; Wm. Griffin—Big Bill we always called him to distinguish him from his half brother, or rather, his step mother's son whose name was Wm. Williams.

"Of other citizens of the town who were well known, though not in the athletic field, were several who took an active part in the debating society that was organized and maintained during the period that Orange Jacobs taught school in Phoenix, and lived for several years thereafter. Among the big guns of the club, as orators and logicians, were Tom Davenport, Orange Jacobs, Sam Colver, Dr. Miner, and Mr. Arundell, who lived on his donation

claim north of the Thurber claim, which was afterwards the Rose farm. To these seasoned debaters was occasionally added one or more of the Geiger boys. Charley Hoxie and James Neil. Occasionally some of Orange Jacobs younger pupils were persuaded to attempt to defend in some adstruce questions such as 'Resolved that Pursuit is more Satisfying than Possession', and many other old and oft-debated subject. Now as a rule, we younger orators would just merely succeed in stammering out a very weak and incoherent apology for not having prepared ourselves, and sit down much relieved.

"No small part of the social activities of the village was that played by the matrons of the place. No ball or social party could be a success without their active aid.

"The few budding young women were so entirely monopolized by the bachelors of various ages and qualities, that the growing beaus and young men would have been entirely left out in the cold had not the matrons taken pity on our forlorn condition and sought us out as partners in the dances, where we usually congregated to gnash our teeth in impotent fury at the bearded men who were swinging our girl sweethearts around as though they belonged to them.

"I remember very distinctly the first time I ventured into the ballroom floor to dance. I was fifteen years old and as bashful and self conscious as a lad of that age ever was There was a cotillion being formed, when Hannah McCumber came up to where I was standing, caught me by the arm and pulled me out to the floor, saying

"I know you want to dance, but you never will unless someone drags you out!"

"The matrons who assisted me through my maiden dance were Aunt Huldah Colver, Mrs. Estes, Mrs. Burns and Aunt Hannah McCumber."

POLITICAL NOTE

The first Republican party meeting in Oregon was at Phoenix, in the Lindley school house, May, 1856. At this time the national Republican party was only a little over two years old.

ANOTHER GOLD RUSH

Beginning in 1858, when new gold regions were discovered in northeastern Oregon and Washington Territory, every few months brought news of more gold strikes. Men came from all over the west. In the spring of sixty-one there were thousands traveling toward the Cariboo placers and other rich fields.

Sam Colver left Phoenix for the north and in June he wrote the following letter home to his wife:

June 11th, 1861

Dear Huldah This date finds us all well. I could not sell the mules and I have started a Passenger and Express train from Walla Walla to the mines that I think will pay me five Hundred Dollars pr month. I shall make two Trips more and then leave the boys and Express messenger to attend to the business until I return home. The mines are better than I expected paying five to fifty Dollars to the hand pr day. They are extensive, new diggings are being struck every few days. I am scratching these lines in haste. I shall write soon when I get something besides the ground for a desk and a stick for a pen.

I remain your affectionate
Husband S. Colver

N.B. tell Jacobs to write soon and give me the amount of that Estate claim tell him to direct his letter to Silverton

Orsen Stearns had this to say about Sam Colver in the gold region: "Uncle Sam [Colver] saw a chance to make some money taking a lot of horses and mules up to the northern mines and running a saddle and pack train from the mines to the nearest source of supply. He took quite a bunch of animals up to the mines where he operated a saddle train, and for the greater part of a year conveying miners to and from the mines and sometimes carrying gold Uncle Sam was knocked down and robbed at one time, the robbers leaving him for dead, but he was only stunned, and managed to crawl to safety. He returned home shortly after . . .

"A vigilance committee later hung or

drove away most of the outlaws, some of whom were elected to protect the people, but joined the gang for profit. One man hung was a former resident of Gasburg. He was one of the two brothers who used to do most of the fiddling in the early day dances. He was a fine looking man, standing six feet four, slender and straight, was handsome and a veritable Beau Brummel among the ladies He was always fond of liquor, and followed bar tending and gambling mostly, but no one of his former friends, and there were many, for despite his wildness he seemed to be good hearted and was sociable and pleasant, ever dreamed of his undertaking the life of a highwayman."

The merchants of the Rogue River valley saw possible profit for themselves in the gold excitement of the north. All they needed to do was prove that the best way to get to the northern mines was through the Rogue River valley.

The newspapers ran weekly news about the mines. On January 10, 1862, the Southern Oregon Gazette published an article full of persuasion: "... There is already a good wagon road from this [Jacksonville] to points on the Columbia from the Dalles to above the mouth of John Day's river, which can be traveled almost the whole year . . . As we say, people journeying to the northern mines from interior California will find it greatly to their advantage to come directly here overland, make their final outfit for the journey in this town where they can purchase everything at low rates Jacksonville and Gasburg will become a mart for furnishings, etc. All classes will recuperate from present depression, trade will grow brisk again, money become plenty and prosperity will once more shine upon the whole community."

PHOENIX GETS BIGGER

Orsen Stearns wrote: "In 1860, there was quite an influx of people in the town of Phoenix for that fall came the tribe of Barneburg, Lavenburg, and Furry, as well as several others.

"Fred and William Barneburg had been among the early donation land

claimants on the east side of Bear Creek near the Taylor and Mathes claims. They had come to the country in the rush to the California gold mines, and later located claims here, leaving their families mostly in Missouri, I think. In 1859 they went back after them, and in 1860 brought them across the plains to Gasburg.

"There was an old lady, the mother, and besides the families of Fred and William [Barneburg], there was John a tailor by trade, with his family; two unmarried brothers, Aaron and Peter—a cripple—and I do not know if there was not an unmarried sister or two, besides Mrs. Lavenburg and Mrs. Furry.

"There was Uncle Lavenburg and a nephew, Augustus Lavenburg, and possibly more whom I have forgotten. John started a tailor shop. Dan started a restaurant and notions shop, selling bees and maybe something else. His wife, Aunt Lizzie, they called her, was a famous cook, and started a boarding house, which soon became famous as the best between Portland and San Francisco. It was not long before stage passengers took their meals there, as Harvey Oatman's wife died about that time and there was no one to keep the hotel.

"Mrs. Oatman left a young baby and three boys older, the eldest, Bertie, being about eight years old. Frank and Homer came next in order, and Elmer, the baby, was raised by the Root family who came to the valley about the same time as the Barneburgs and rented the Wagner place.

"Mr. Root was a singing master, and his entire family was musical. The eldest daughter married a tinner, by name of Ruser, soon after reaching the valley. Annie, the next daughter, married Ole Gunnison, a carpenter, a few years after. Charles, the youngest, was about the age of Lew Colver and was a very nice pleasant fellow. Later on he took up a claim next to that of Lew Colver's and mine, in Klamath County, in the 60's, batching with us for a year or more, when he contracted tuberculosis and died without completing any title to his land, and as none of his people cared to take it up, it was occupied by another party.

"Charlie Root had been in love with one of the Shook girls, a family who came into the valley in 1860, and who rented the Hiram Colver farm. There was quite a family of them, John, Mary, Newton, Hattie, Rhoda, David, Will, Peter and Ada. They went out to Klamath County and located there in 1869, and three of the boys and the youngest girl live there yet [in 1922]. Mary, the eldest girl, married James Sutton, who was a former editor of the Jacksonville Sentinel.

"The Davenports were living in Gasburg when Olive Oatman was rescued from the Indians and she lived with her relatives for a time. She and Florinda Davenport, 'Tim's wife', were great chums, and Olive gave Mrs. D. and several other women friends exhibitions of her swimming prowess in Bear Creek, teaching some of them swimming lessons there."

Two little girls, Olive and Mary Oatman, were stolen by the Indians while coming west in 1851. Mary starved to death during her captivity, but Olive was rescued after five years and taken to Fort Yuma. There a great welcome was prepared for her. She was ashamed to come to the party in her ragged bark clothes, so the wife of one of the officers gave her a very smart dress in the latest style of 1856.

One of her Oatman cousins from southern Oregon brought Olive to Phoenix, where she lived for a time with Rev. S. P. Taylor and his family. Everybody liked her. At first she was very sensitive about the blue lines the Indians had tattooed on her chin to mark a slave, and would cover them with her hand. In no time at all she relearned the ways of white people and she was even more particular than most girls about the cut and fit of her clothes.

Olive Oatman stayed in the Rogue River valley a few years and then went east. The last heard of her was that she married and lived in Texas.

THE WAR BETWEEN THE STATES AND CAMP BAKER AT PHOENIX

Orsen Stearns wrote: "Meanwhile the Civil War was drawing near and the

Olive Oatman, five years an Indian captive, came to Phoenix in 1856.

GRANGE
CO-OPERATIVE ASS'N.
Central Point and Ashland



news of the firing on Fort Sumpter sent a thrill of anger through the hearts of all true patriots, and the necessity of prompt action on the part of all true patriots required that this remote part of the great nation do its part in the defense of the Union. Remote as we were from Washington, with no communication except by way of vessel by way of Panama, or around by way of the Horn, it took six weeks to two months for news to reach us, and much might happen in that time. Although our frontiers were occupied by hostile Indians who were only held in subjection by the military forces stationed at various frontier posts, the necessity of having all available troops sent to the front necessitated the raising of volunteers to replace the regulars now guarding us, that they might assist in putting down the rebellion.

"A call was immediately issued for raising a full regiment of cavalry, and Jackson County was required to furnish one Company.

"Recruiting offices were opened, and the erection of the log barracks and their accommodation was commenced in the early fall of 1861. The site selected for the camp was in the woods about a mile southeast of the town of Gasburg, on Coleman Creek.

"In a short time, and log barracks, stables for the horses, officers quarters, and the store houses were completed, for as fast as volunteers were recruited, they were set to work. As soon as the barracks were habitable, the clearing of the ground for drill purposes followed and it became a busy place."

The news of the fall of Fort Sumpter, which was the beginning of the

Civil War, reached Oregon by steamer on April 30, 1861. That year the two coasts were connected by telegraph and the first message to go across the continent told of Colonel E. D. Baker's death in the battle of Ball's Bluff on October 21. Senator Baker had stumped the state in fifty-nine and even people in the remotest, brush-bound mining camps of southern Oregon had heard his golden oratory. As the army camp at Phoenix was finished about the time he was killed and hadn't been named yet, it was naturally called Camp Baker.

Hobart Taylor enlisted in the northern army and expected to go to the East to fight. Instead he went to Walla Walla and helped put down the Umatilla Indian Uprising. The following is part of the diary he kept from the first of January, 1861, to May 31, 1861.

"Camp Baker, four o'clock, P. M.

"Arrived here in good trim, found the Officers very pleasant but the soldiers slightly inebriated. When the tattoo sounded, I repaired to the 'walls' of a cabin to sleep. Slept some and froze the balance of the night.

"Jan. 2nd.—Up early and went to work on the cabin in the morning, got it quite comfortable. Afternoon: made a stall for my horse.

"Jan. 3rd.—Made bunks for sleeping. Our dinner consisted of a kind of ? soup, very good to the taste but not much nourishment in it, and for drink, we had some of the best of water served up in fine style. At four o'clock the roll was called. Half an hour later; stable call,—and after that, supper in great varieties. First: bread and meat and water, spoiled by adding some coffee to it. Second: meat, coffee and bread. Third: Coffee, bread and meat.

"There are sixteen of us in my cabin, eight bunks all up in good order and as I am writing, they are all in and at this time are singing Nellie Gray, while I am perched on the upper bunk to keep out of the way. By the way,—the cabin is 16x18 on the outside, inside about 14x16 feet.

"Jan. 4th.—The day passed off very pleasant. We repaired to our cabin, got a broom and bucket on our own re-

sponsibilities. Our parade ground is not finished yet, but soon will be, judging from the way the men work. All are anxious to get to drilling. The horse feed is scarce; not enough hay to go around, but I got enough for mine by taking half straw.

"This evening the roll will be called at 9 o'clock for the first time. Some of the boys have been going to town [Gasburg] without license and staying until late at night and they wish to put a stop to it.

"Sunday, Jan. 5th.—Went to Church. Heard Father [Stephen Taylor] preach. Stayed at class meeting; spoke of the joys of the Christian life. I went to the office, received three letters of not much importance, but truly a pleasure to read.

"Jan. 6th.—Weather clear and pleasant, gentle south wind. We worked on the stable all day and this evening. I answered a letter.

"Jan. 7th.—Weather cloudy and snowy until about ten o'clock. Went to town on business for the quartermaster. Stayed one hour. Done nothing but take care of my horse after I came back.

"Jan. 8th.—Cloudy and rainy. Our cannon arrived at ten A. M. Commenced drilling in the afternoon. We made an awkward appearance at first. Could not tell right from left. Fired 13 rounds from the cannon. Marched again, broke ranks, retired to our cabins. Our orderly sergeant gave a bottle of 'Thomas's Best' to each cabin. I took it and made bitters of it. We spent our evening roasting rabbits.

"Jan. 9th.—Commenced work for the Quartermaster. Worked until noon, then it rained the rest of the day. Went to prayer meeting, then came home. The Bugler made a false alarm much to the displeasure of some and to the pleasure of others. Perhaps the Bugler will be put on fatigue duty for the false alarm.

"Jan 10th.—Didn't put the Bugler on fatigue. Cloudy and commenced raining at 9 o'clock and rained hard all day. Bear Creek is very high. The tannery is in danger of washing off the bank, even to the vats.

"Done nothing all day. Got tired of



Bear Creek in flood. The girls are Nora Roberts, Marie McClain and Martha Carey.

FISCHER'S GROCERY & SHELL GAS STATION,
Phoenix

it. Hard work to sit up in the nouse all day and read and sleep. We passed resolutions prohibiting scuffling or hallooing in the cabin. Took one lesson in drilling. Was very awkward. Can't tell how to go through the maneuvers yet, but hope to become expert before long in the use of firearms. The snow is about 7 in deep. What sport the boys had in snow-balling."

Some horses were taken to the Ish ranch because of lack of hay at Camp Baker. On January 16, 1862, Hobart Taylor wrote:

"Took 25 horses to Ishes this morning. I was detailed for the service. It is very cold. My whiskers were all frosted with ice. Took dinner with the volunteers at Ishes. The dinner was composed of frozen bread and raw bacon. It tasted good to a hungry soldier . . ."

The high water took the tannery on January 22nd. Mrs. Barneburg died on the 25th and left eight children. Mr's. Bayley died and left two children.

Hobart Taylor wrote the next day:

"Sunday—January 26th.—Widow Bayley was buried today. After the funeral sermon, the administration of the Lord's supper was attended to. I was not pres-

ent owing to rheumatism. John Barneburg is very sick not expected to live. Disease: sore throat.

"Jan. 27th.—Brother Barneburg died last night. Was buried today at three. Was well attended at the burial. No sermon was preached for either wife or husband. Report says George Gridley not expected to live. Chris Bayley has gone to set up with him. This has been a very cold day.

"Jan. 28th.—Cloudy. Commenced work this morning for the Quartermaster. Worked until noon; then it commenced snowing. It is very cold. George Gridley is better. His disease it not putrid sore throat; it is from the effects of having his skull factured, about six months ago.

"Jan. 29th.—Snowed all day very hard. Sat in the cabin and perused papers and books. George Gridley is better.

"Jan. 30th.—Clear as crystal and cold. The snow is about one foot deep on the level. Did not go to prayer meeting this evening owing to the rheumatism. Hope it leaves me before long, else I will give up the ship. Some of the boys are very much dissatisfied and want out of the Company. Guess their wants will not be satisfied in that respect.



The County Poor Farm

PHOENIX CHEVRON SERVICE STATION

"Jan. 31st.—Snowing some. Very cold. All the Company were here today to answer to their names. The 2nd Company were named and all of the Officers appointed. The name of the Company is Jackson Rangers. Sewell True, Captain; Drake, 1st Lieut.; John McCall, 2nd. Lieut. One half of the officers got inebriated in the afternoon.

"Feb. 1st. 1862.—Cloudy and cold in the morning. Thawed some in the afternoon. One man disobeyed an order, would not chop wood. Set a guard over him with muskets with bayonets. One fight in our Company: Corp. Elliot and private Peru. Some blood shed; one black eye, with a bloody nose on each side. Several of the men went to town and got some tarantula juice which makes men halloo and fight. Orders are not to go to town any more lest they get on a 'bust'. Cold this evening."

Two months later, April first, the Umpqua Company arrived at Camp Baker and the Josephine Company came a week later. Hobart Taylor wrote:

"April 7th.—Pleasant and cool. The Josephine Company arrived at Camp Baker this evening, number fifty eight men, Capt. Matthews commanding.

They are a rough set of men, judging by external appearances. Camp is quiet."

Then on May 5th Camp Baker was left behind. Hobart Taylor wrote:

"Packed up and started for Ft. Vancouver. Broke up Camp at 9 o'clock, formed in line; command was given to mount. Some of the horses commenced bucking, but we all got formed in column. Then the thoughts of home crowded themselves in"

WAR TIME PROSPERITY IN PHOENIX

Orsen Stearns said: "Gasburg simply rushed into the proportions and activity of a small city, as all material and substances required to maintain a full company of cavalry with their horses and everything pertaining thereto was of necessity purchased there.

"The shoeing of all horses and teams, kept the blacksmith shops busy. Will Smith had been joined the fall before or that spring by O. T. Brown, who had just come across the plains from Wisconsin, and he was a good scout and tireless worker, though a small man.



A Prosperous Hotel

McDONALD TEXACO SERVICE STATION

He and Smith took a contract to shoe the government stock, and it kept them busy from daylight until dark, weekdays and Sundays. Meanwhile Brown took the Ague, which was then the prevailing disease all along Bear Creek every summer and fall, still never stopping to rest except when he shook so hard he could not drive a shoenail. Brown worked till spring, and when the cavalry left he was almost a physical wreck.

"The raising of the company of cavalry in the valley sadly depleted the number of young men in the community, as well as to change the political complexion of the vote. Jackson County for a few years had become quite a strong Republican county, but after the departure of the volunteers, followed almost immediately by a large influx of Missouri bushwhackers, who had been chased out of Missouri when Price's army was defeated and scattered the first year of the war, it was for many years Democratic.

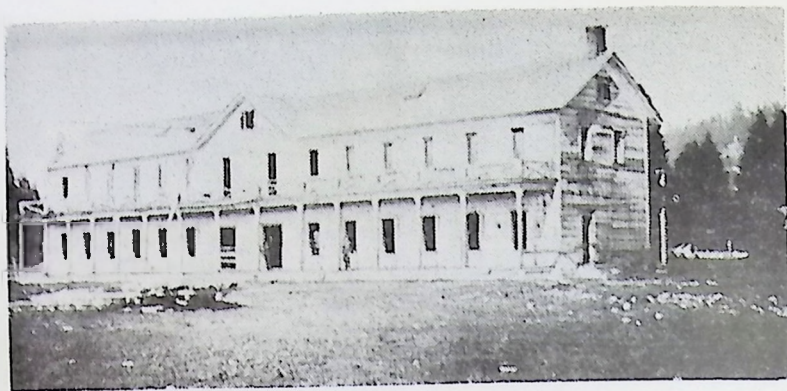
"Among the young men who enlisted in the first cavalry from Gasburg that I now recall were the following: Hobart Taylor, Jas. Hoxie, Jas. Kimball,

Robert Grey, Gus Lavenburg, Felix and Joseph Pepoon—newcomers—, and I think John VanDyke, and several others whose names I have forgotten.

"As the mines were still booming, one or two other businesses that started up during the recruiting of the cavalry, still kept up. Henry Mensor, a Jew merchant of Jacksonville, put a stock of goods into the Oatman brick store, and Patrick McMannus put up a store farther south.

"S. M. Waite had sold his grist mill to a big German who formerly had a donation claim east of Manzanita on the desert, as it is called. This man's name was Wm. Hess, and quite a character too.

"Another family came into the country about 1860, first renting a place across Bear Creek, later moving into the burg, where Uncle Billy, as he was called, followed shoemaking and mending. His family consisted of himself and wife, and four children, one girl and three boys, ranging from 16 to 10 years of age. The eldest, Wm. Henry, was a member of the Mountain Rangers, a home guard outfit to which Lew Colver and myself belong in 1863 and 1864, and



Fort Klamath—built 1864, abandoned 1889. Many Phoenix boys were stationed here.

M. M. HUGGINS, Medford
Mobilgas Distributor

afterwards joined the first Oregon Infantry, to which many of the boys of the valley belonged.

"The Allens settled near Coleman Creek and their daughter Maria later married John Coleman.

"A man, with two sons, Alfred P. and Rufus, came there about the same time and took over the tannery that Geiger and others had established and ran it for many years. He was a Yankee and a very queer character. He was a small, skinny man, with little beady black eyes, a hawk's beak nose, hatchet faced, and a wrinkled leather colored skin. He was a very pious hypocrite, and notoriously unreliable.

"About that time also came the elder Thurbers, the father and mother of John (Jack) Thurber, or Jack of Clubs, as he was called.

"Isabel Colver Rose came into possession of his donation land claim, and was living there when she died. The Thurbers were Vermont Yankees, and all of them original characters."

CAMP BAKER USED AGAIN IN 1864

"In the fall of 1864," wrote Orsen Stearns, "President Lincoln issued his last call for volunteers, three hundred thousand men, and Oregon was called upon to furnish her quota, which was fixed at our regiment of infantry and enough cavalry to fill the depleted ranks of the first cavalry, most of whom had

been discharged by reason of expiration of their terms of enlistment.

"Jackson, Josephine, Coos and Curry counties were assigned the raising of one full company of infantry, and Franklin B. Sprague, the miller in Hess's mill, undertook the recruiting of them with the assistance of I. D. Applegate, who had been in command of the 'Mountain Rangers', a militia to which Lou Colver and many others as also myself had belonged for nearly two years.

"Mr. Sprague asked me to join his company and assist him in the recruiting office in Jacksonville, but as I had a wood contract yet uncompleted for Uncle Sam Colver, it was necessary to get his consent to leaving it unfinished, which was readily granted, and on the 17th day of November [1864], I entered the service, being the first to enroll in the company.

"On the 19th three other men enlisted, men returning from the northern mines, having their blanket rolls on their backs. I was detailed to escort the recruits out to Camp Baker, about eight miles distant, over the old hill road by Hamlin's farm. A Lieutenant McGuire of the 1st Oregon Cavalry had been sent out to take charge of the old camp and drill the recruits. He had moved into one of the cabins a few days before and had but a meager outfit for batching, very few supplies of any kind to commence with. I left Jacksonville about three



Presbyterian Church at Phoenix. Mrs. W. Mathes, her daughters and Mrs. W. Clyde.

PHOENIX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, Established 1875, still serving the community. "Come into the House of the Lord."
RANDES MARKET, Phoenix

o'clock P.M. with my recruits pretty well ginned up, to walk over a rough road eight miles to Camp Baker. What with the bad roads and erratic movement of my recruits, on account of an overload of spirits, it was well after dark when we reached McGuire's headquarters. As there was no bedding for me, and the four had to spread their blankets on the floor, I trudged on to Gasburg and put up at Colver's. That was my introduction to military service.

"After spending a week or two in the recruiting service, Captain I. D. Applegate was cheated out of the promised lieutenantancy and Harrison B. Oatman was given the commission. No plausible reason was ever given for shelving Applegate . . . Oatman did nothing to help raise the company and never could drill it.

"As our company contained many neighborhood boys, some of them pretty wild and the drilling did not occupy as much of their time as it ought, many of the neighborhood hen roosts and pig pens suffered from night visitors and foragers. No one was ever arrested or

punished though the tables of several of the mess houses were loaded with food not issued by our commissary.

"One man in our company, Stephen T. Halleck by name, would never eat any of the foraged provisions, and used to remonstrate with the boys against the practice of foraging with great vigor and sincerity. He was a quiet man of about forty years of age, a native of New England, a sincere Christian of strong convictions. He had a mining claim near Coleman creek and had been in that neighborhood for several years and was well liked. He met a sad death the winter of 1865, returning from the valley where he had been on furlough and froze to death in sight of the fort the morning of April 1st. He was the only death in our company during nearly three years of service.

"Our company marched over the mountain to Fort Klamath by way of Green Springs Mountain, in May 1865, arriving there the first day of June."

The Civil War was all over by April of 1865, and this unfortunate company,



Rev. and Mrs. William Clyde
at home.

VALLEY REPAIR SHOP, Phoenix

Company I, 1st Oregon Infantry, which had enlisted to go to the eastern states and fight the "seceshers" who had started "the slaveholder's war", never got any further away from home than Fort Klamath. They were mustered out of service July 19, 1867.

KLAMATH COUNTY WAS ONCE PART OF JACKSON

George Nurse is thought to have been the first settler in what is now known as Klamath Basin. In the old days Phoenix people called that region "east of the mountains" and, later, "the Klamath lakes country". George Nurse ran a ferry over Link River and started Linkville, which grew up to be Klamath Falls.

In 1867, Ozro T. Brown, Orsen Stearns and Lew Colver were the first to take up land "east of the mountains". All were from Phoenix.

Two years later Sam Colver rebuilt the old road from Ashland to Klamath Falls. In the spring he started his crew at the Songer place on the stage road and before fall had opened up fifty miles of good mountain road over which teams of two horses could haul a full half ton

of freight without having to unload and pack up the steep places.

This road cost six hundred dollars. Four hundred was put up by the thirty Klamath settlers of voting age, and David Stearns and Sam Colver put up the rest.

THE MODOC INDIAN WAR

The Modoc Indian war started the last part of November 1872 and ended in the early summer of 1873. It was fought in the lava beds, desolate country near the Oregon-California line. People from the Rogue River valley in Oregon, and from Yreka, California, were interested in this war and men from both places volunteered to fight in it along with the regular army.

Even after the war started, there were some who still tried to smooth things out between the Indians and the settlers. Sam Colver was one of them. He wrote home to his wife and told her about it:

Hot Creek Dec 13th 1872
Dear Huldah I am in good health. our attempt to get the Hot Creek Modocks to the Reservation was defeated by the



The church was always
decorated at Christmas.

RAY'S HIWAY MARKET, Phoenix

rash indiscretion of Men who ware more under the Influanse Stricknine whiske, than Reason Justice or Humanity I am with Capt Fairchild and Stoping in a Log House. The guard reports Indias about last night but thare was no attact so I conclud they did not like the looks of our position—I think we can hold our position untill reinforced sufficiently to move quarters I will try to get home by the firs of Januar I remain your

Affectionate Husban Sam Colver

The following is Orsen Stearns' account of the incident:

"He [Sam Colver] succeeded in collecting nearly all the Modocs who had lived on Hot Creek and on Willow Creek, the Fairchild and Dorris Ranches and had got them over twenty miles on the road to Linkville, when they heard that a party of armed men from the latter place were on their way to meet them with the avowed intention of killing them. This, of course, frightened the Indians, and that night they all dispersed making their way to Captain Jack's stronghold in the lava beds.

"This disgraceful and cowardly attempt resulted in adding quite a number of warriors to the force of Captain Jack, and defeated all future attempts with the Modocs as they would have no confidence in any promises of the white men.

"It was very creditable to Colver, and should have been widely commended, but was scarcely noticed. Many, if not all, of those who composed the blood-thirsty crowd who comprised these raiders, had an opportunity to show their valor the night after the fight with Col. Jackson on Lost River. When a call for volunteers, to go up Lost River, through Langell Valley, Clear Lake and Tule Lake, was called for, only seven men out of twenty-five who had expressed a desire to go could be found ready to venture forth in the night to make the trip through the country adjacent to the Modoc country. Some cowards remained behind while seven men who were not cowardly went down through the dangerous country, rescued the survivors of the Tule Lake massacre took them to the soldiers' camp and returned to Linkville after warning all the set-



A bell tower was added to the Phoenix church.

PORTER LUMBER CO.,
Medford

lers within a radius of 100 miles of the Modoc outbreak."

After the Modoc Indians lost the war, they were sent to Oklahoma.

GOOD TIMES AND BAD IN PHOENIX 1864 TO 1875

The Democrat Times, Feb 12, 1875.
"Phoenix

"On Bear Creek, eight miles north of Ashland, a city that was, but now living in the glories of the past, for decay, desolation and death are inscribed on her 'Mouldering walls and ruined temples'. On my return from Boise mines in '64, I rode through this city on a talented mustang. In those days it was a home of lawyers, doctors, artizans and merchants; but e'en then it had reached its acme of glory, and was gathering momentum for swift decline. It may yet resume and surpass its oldtime greatness, when railroads connect this isolated country with the great marts of trade and commerce, as it is in the very heart of an agricultural community. Little more can be said of this place

--dusty in summer, muddy in winter, it is the picture of grim want and hard times. It contains two excellent grist mills, store, tavern, school and a flourishing order of Good Templars. Its people are temperate, industrious, and always ready for a dance or a revival. The '49 diggings, two miles west of this place, have been worked year after year, and still prove remunerative to hydraulic enterprise. The remains of a mammoth mastodon, solidly embedded in gravel, at the depth of eight feet, were exhumed some years ago."

A CIRCUIT RIDER

There were many ministers in the early days, but the best remembered is Reverend Moses A. Williams. He lived in Phoenix for many years and wore incredibly long whiskers. On the cold Sunday morning of January 15, 1860, he went to church to find that the boys had forgotten, not for the first time, to light the fire. While the whole congregation waited, the stove was lit and the church slowly warmed. That night he recorded in his diary that he had been almost too annoyed to preach.

Sixteen volumes of Rev. Williams' hand-written diaries were given to the Special Collections at the Library of the University of Oregon. Commenting on the gift, Nellie Rose Jones wrote in the Klamath Falls Herald and News, April 23, 1949:

"He [Rev. Williams] officiated at baptisms, burials and marriages, in addition to his many pastoral duties from 1857 to his death December 11, 1897 at the age of 86 years. He preached his first sermon in this part of the Oregon Territory on November 1, 1857, near what is now known at the Patrick Dunn donation land claim, five miles south of Ashland, Jackson county, which then included Klamath and Lake counties as they are known today.

"Moses Aaron Williams was born in Washington county, Pennsylvania, September 26, 1811. After he graduated at Washington college, Connersbrugh, Pa. (Now Washington and Jefferson), he felt the call to preach and teach. He was ordained by the Presbytery of Georgia in 1846. After completing Theo-



In town were: Rob Furry, John Jacobs, Grover Cope-land, Milo Furry, Art Rose, John Edwards and Sam Barr, standing.

**SOUTHERN OREGON LIVESTOCK
AUCTION CO.** Phoenix
**ECONOMY MATTRESS and
UPHOLSTERING CO.** Phoenix

logical studies at Columbia seminary, where he is said to have graduated in 1849, Rev. Williams was for three years minister at Uniontown, Pa. Later he was on his way to a mission station in Brazil, South America. It took four months to sail around the horn. He taught and preached in Brazil for three years, when failing health caused him to return to the United States by sailing vessel to the Puget Sound area, then to California in 1856, then to Oregon. When he first came to Oregon he was a single man, but in July, 1858, he returned to Sacramento and married Mrs. Amelia Jacks of that city. Her children were Will H. Jacks, who married Ida Gore, and Carolita Jacks who became Mrs. Walter Gore. In 1873 Mrs. Williams died. Later Rev. Williams married another widow, Mrs. Samuel D. VanDyke, who was the second wife of Mr. VanDyke.

"Mrs. A. F. Sandlin, who gave the valuable manuscript to the university library, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Gore, and the step-granddaughter of Rev. M. A. Williams.

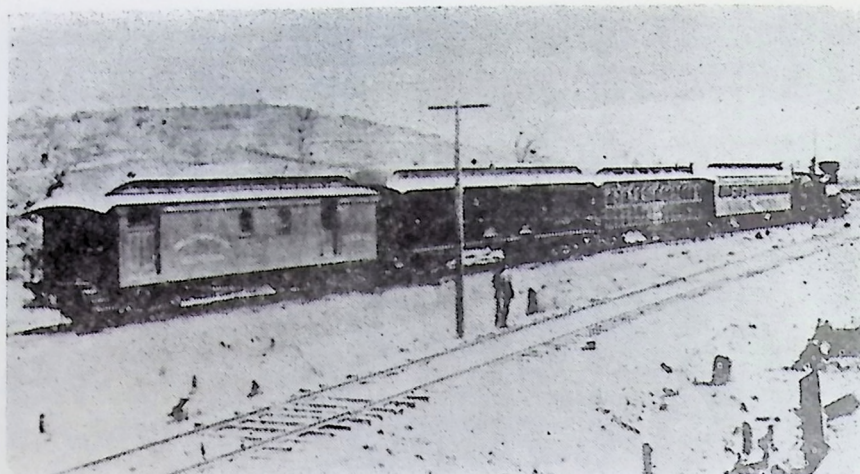
"For much of the information contained in this story of Rev. M. A. Wil-

liams, the writer is indebted to Rev. L. H. Mitchelmore who was for some years pastor of the First Presbyterian church at Jacksonville, Oregon."

SAM COLVER REFUSES TO SELL PHOENIX

The Ashland Tidings, Friday
September 11, 1878.

"From the Phoenix letter: Mr. Olwell gives steady employment to a half dozen millers, laborers and one teamster. I think he would soon revolutionize this burg if he were proprietor of the townsite. He made an offer to Sam Colver last spring to buy the entire townsite for \$50 an acre, and remodel and replat it, lay out new streets, and widen old ones. He also proposed to set aside a suitable plat for a public park, and another for a school house, but his offer was refused. I am sure if 'Uncle Sam' would take that course himself it would help build up the town and increase the value of his own property."



The railroad tracks reached Phoenix from the north in 1884.

**PHOENIX HARDWARE
COOK'S CAFE and
FOUNTAIN** Phoenix

A CELEBRITY COMES TO TOWN

Abigail Scott Duniway, the Oregon woman who fought for women's rights, visited the Rogue River valley in the summer of 1879. The Democrat Times, Jacksonville, on July 4, made the mild comment: "IN TOWN—Mrs. Abigail Scott Duniway, editress of the New Northwest of Portland, and a lady well known throughout the state, arrived in Jacksonville on Friday last . . . Mrs. Duniway stands at the head of the Woman's Suffrage party in Oregon. . ."

Mrs. Duniway was an experienced and quick-witted speaker but her theories met opposition in many town. The Jacksonville audience was not merely unfriendly; eggs were thrown at her and the crowd outside burned her in effigy.

Mrs. Duniway wrote home to her own newspaper and on July 17 the following item appeared in the New Northwest:

"The 'militia's' been out and egged us! And they've burned us in effigy, the image being a fair likeness of George Washington, so we're told, though we didn't see it; and it wore a white apron with the words 'Libeller of families' on it in big letters . . . Verily, there's no form of tyranny that dies so hard

as man's rights. Let us be patient with it as it undergoes its death agonies. Only one egg hit us, and that was fresh and sweet, as it took us square on the scalp and saved a shampooing bill. But what a comment on the manners and morals of an incorporated town! . . . But, to the credit of the better class of men be it spoken, they were not engaged in it at all. It was bearded hoodlums and bad whiskey that did it . . ."

The late Fletcher Linn recalled hearing his mother talk about it when Abigail Scott Duniway came to southern Oregon that summer of seventy nine. Everybody seemed to be against women's rights—even the women. Anne Sophia Hoffman Linn was sorry that Mrs. Duniway had had the eggs thrown at her, and that she had been burned in effigy in the street, but she thought that a woman was stepping out of her place to speak from the lecture platform and to engage in politics. Fletcher's father, David Linn, didn't express himself as much as Fletcher's mother, but he agreed.

Mrs. Duniway went to Phoenix next. Nellie Rose Jones writes: "Charles Low, who was for many years sheriff of Klamath county and who was the father of Lloyd Low, veteran sheriff of Klamath



The Depot was fine and new.

**HUMANE SOCIETY
BOARDING KENNELS,**
Medford

math county, made his home at the Samuel Colver house in Phoenix, Oregon, for some years when a young man. He and Louie Colver were close friends. In fact Charley Low helped to carry Louie Colver home after Louie was shot.

"Charles Low told me that my Uncle Louie Colver, then a young man at home would be so vexed when Mrs. Duniway was to be a guest in the Colver home, because Grandmother wanted everything to be in ship shape, inside and out, on such an occasion.

"Wild and domestic livestock ran at large in those days. An irrigation ditch crossed the road just a few feet south of the Colver house, and wagons and travel vehicles of all kinds crossing this ditch made a nice wide puddle. Hogs would wallow in this puddle, then, on hot days, would lie down along the front of the house to be in the shade, making a veritable pig pen of the entrance, to say nothing of the pungent odors they sent out.

"When Mrs. Duniway was coming, Louie's most important and distasteful job was to drive the pigs away from the front of the house so as not to offend the sight and smell of the coming distinguished guest. He drove the pigs away to the best of his ability, swear-

ing all the bad words he knew every step of the process, and expressing the wish that Mrs. Duniway would make her visits few and far between, or words to that effect."

The New Northwest, July 17, 1879

Mrs. Duniway wrote: "Accompanied Mrs. Plymale in one of their elegant turn-outs from her good husband's livery stable, we drove over to Phoenix, our gallant lady pilot proving efficient and successful at her business.

"Phoenix is a charming little country village, chiefly noted as the abiding place of Hon. Sam Colver and his splendid spouse, with whom we spent several delightful days, and lectured in the evening to overflowing houses. Here are two grist mills of apparently sufficient capacity to grind the grain of the entire valley. There are two flourishing dry goods stores, one kept by J. R. Reames, Esq., and the other by Mr. Sergeant . . . There is also a flourishing Good Templar's lodge, a church, a schoolhouse, a drug store, a blacksmith shop, etc., and a surrounding country vastly rich in agriculture, fruit and blood stock. Phoenix is about a dozen miles from Jacksonville, and it is thought by many will yet become the county seat.



The Ashland to Grants Pass gasoline powered interurban stopped at Talent.

TRIANGLE FOOD MARKET
Groceries: Phoenix
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Klarin
Meat: Vern Nelson

"Mr. Colver, or Uncle Sam, as he is familiarly called by everybody, is a noted personage, who began his career many years ago as a theological student [Note: According to the Colver family records, Sam Colver studied law.] but apostatized, and turned his attention to verse-making, lecturing on anti-slavery and Woman's Suffrage, and running an underground railroad. He was once cast into a dungeon for opinion's sake, and has ever been a consistent advocate of the freedom of the press, the tongue of the people. Evil-doers fear him, friends honor him, and enemies are compelled to respect him.

"Our lectures here have been so largely attended and so well received that we have promised to return . . . and give a fourth address: subject, "The Temperance Reform."

THE RAILROAD AT LAST

For many years a traveler could go by train from Portland, Oregon, to Roseburg. If he wished to continue south he got into a stagecoach and did not board the train again until Redding, California. By 1883 the tracks came to Grant's Pass and by 1884 they reached Phoenix. On December 17, 1887, a south-bound and a north-bound train met at

Ashland and there was a big celebration.

Kerbyville, the county seat of Josephine county found itself off the main line and it only took a year for the court house to move to the infant town of Grant's Pass (which people were trying to name Sugar Pine). Williamsburg, a very rich mining town during the Civil War and a hot-bed of southern sympathy, completed its gradual decline. Union Town is gone. Jacksonville, also missed by the railroad, managed to hang on to the county seat for years but finally had to give up to Medford, a town that was born on October 27, 1883, when C. C. Beekman, C. Mingus, C. W. Brobeck and I. R. Phipps conveyed twenty acres to the Oregon California Railroad Company for a depot.

Phoenix was right beside the tracks and there wasn't any trouble at all. There wasn't even anything like the difficulty in Central Point over Haskell Amy's bill for bacon and other farm produce that he sold to track-laying crew. Somebody thought his bill was too high so the tracks were laid right between his barn and his house to get even—or so the story goes!

A thousand people lived in Ashland when the railroad came.



Two automobiles arrived in Phoenix from Talent.

**NORTON FOOD MARKET
& NORTON LUMBER CO.**
Phoenix

The Rogue River valley had been waiting for a railroad for such a long time. "WE WANT AN OUTLET", had cried the Southern Oregon Press in their Saturday paper for June 1, 1867. "Southern Oregon can never assume her great and legitimate importance as one of the brightest and fairest sections of the Pacific coast until we obtain some easy and expeditious means of communication with the outer world."

Sometimes the newspaper pointed out that horses were almost as fast as rail transportation and that horses would always be needed for really heavy freighting, but usually there was wistful speculation about whether the Grave Creek Hills to the north would be the hardest to cross, or the Siskiyou to the south. Winnemucca, Nevada, seemed closer and more attainable at times than either California or the Willamette valley.

People never gave up the idea of a railroad. Several companies were formed, promises made, tracks laid and, once in a while, money even changed hands. Money had been asked for so often and nothing ever came of it that people missed their chance the one time money would have done some good.

Forty thousand dollars was required to lay the tracks through Jacksonville.

John Ross, son of the John Ross who fought the Indians so hard and so well in the early days, said that "the big shots of Jacksonville" could have got that much money together and never felt it. He said that they figured the tracks would have to come through the county seat, forty thousand dollars or not.

Somebody else said that when the price of forty thousand dollars was set, David Linn, of Jacksonville, put up five thousand and expected other men to put up the rest. C. C. Beekman, also of Jacksonville and the town's most successful man, talked against the deal with the railroad. David Linn raised his offer to ten thousand, which was one quarter of the amount asked. Mr. Beekman still talked against it. Nobody else would put up any money and ten thousand was as high as David Linn would go—so the railroad by-passed what was once the richest town in Oregon.

Today Jacksonville remains firmly in the nineteenth century, still elegant—an unexploited "ghost town" of great charm.

THE END OF THE EARLY DAYS

All during the eighties, Phoenix was a happy little town. At the first of the decade, the women were concerned with

Lily Langtry styles in bonnets and the men were deciding how many cattle crossing and culverts they would require when the railroad tracks came by.

In 1891, Sam Colver, first resident of Phoenix, lost himself in the storm of February, in Klamath County. While

trying to cross the lake on the ice, he either drowned or froze to death. He had always been interested in spiritualism and late one night, during the time when he might have died, Huldah Colver heard his special knock at the door of the house at Phoenix. She went to the door to let him in, but he wasn't there.



Colver Hall, Phoenix, Oregon.

ADAH'S BEAUTY SHOP
Phoenix
SELBY CHEVROLET CO.
Ashland

THE OLDEST HOUSE IN JACKSON COUNTY

In the summer of 1855, Sam Colver built his big house across the wagon road from his first cabin. He made it fifty feet square, of timbers that were dovetailed at the corners and secured by wooden pins. There were loopholes for rifles in the second story. Nobody remembers now when the weather boards were put on the outside—but it must have been early. The balcony that extended across the front, with an outside staircase, was taken down about 1918.

There were three front doors. The one in the middle had small panes of glass around the sides and top and it opened from the front porch into a long hall that ran back through the house to the kitchen. Off this central hall were large rooms, each with its own fireplace.

All of the rooms inside were plastered,

and, on December 14, 1865, fifteen-year-old Isabel Colver wrote in a letter to her brother at Fort Klamath: "We are seriously considering ceiling and papering our sitting room, so I expect you will hardly know who lives there when you come home. Mother has bought some real pretty paper I think, but I fear the fence will not get fixed before you get home."

The kitchen was big and roomy and in Huldah Colver's time there was a fireplace in it. One stove was in the kitchen and another on the back porch, and they cooked and ate out there in the summer time.

About thirty feet west of the house was a dug well and a board walk was built from it to the back porch. Later, the well was covered with a shed and, close by, stood the milk house, with shelves on the south side where the milk pans could be sunned. There was

also a smoke house, a chicken house and an ash hopper for the making of lye for soft soap.

In at least one old photograph, the woodshed can be seen just south of the house. It stood close to the wagon road so that a man could throw wood into the opening from a wagon. On the front porch, in the space under the outside staircase to the balcony, was the harness closet. It was very dark in there, very warm and the air smelled like leather.

The barns were off by themselves, across the wagon road.

The rooms in the southeast corner of the house were finished first and Sam Colver's parents lived in them until they both died in the year 1866.

The Colvers always had relatives, friends or neighbor children living with them. The big room upstairs was used for everything that went on in the neighborhood—dances, school, spelling bees, debates, church and lectures.

Nellie Rose Jones, grand daughter of Sam and Hulah Colver, writes about her childhood in the Colver house: "In the evenings after the cows had been milked, the eggs gathered, the chickens fed, the wood and kindling arranged neatly on the front porch near the door, the supper over and the dishes washed, we gathered in the living room. A large backlog with finer wood kept a cheery blaze in the fireplace. The black and white Cocker Spaniel dog and the old gray cat were stretched comfortably on the rug in front of the fire. Grandma Colver sat by the large, round center table, on which always rested the big family Bible and she would read her daily chapter in the Good Book, following the lines with her forefinger and stopping to chuckle, occasionally, over some passage that sounded funny, but remarking, 'It must be all right or it wouldn't be there.'

"At the center of the fireplace mantle was a large clock, and at each end was a tall milk glass candlestick in the shape of a cross with a figure nailed to it. On each side of the clock was a china vase, flared at the top, with scroll designs on the sides and a bouquet of colorful flowers painted on the front. On

the round table in the northeast corner was a copy of the poems of Mrs. Felicia Hemans, one of William Cowper's poems, a 'Book of Familiar Quotations', a copy of 'David and Anna Matson', by Abigail Scott Duniway and other books. The Colvers were lovers of books and had brought some of them across the plains.

"A large mirror hung near the front door. Under it was a wash stand holding a blue and white toilet set, bowl, water pitcher, soap dish, and, inside the wash stand, was the chamber to match the set. For this was also Grandma's bedroom. Her bed, with its snowy white spread and stiffly laundered pillow shams, edged with white lace, was a very decorative feature of the room. Against the south wall was the Mason and Hamlin organ. The bureau with a large mirror stood across the southwest corner of the room. On it was a linen towel with a red design across the ends just above the fringe and, in season, a fresh bouquet of roses every morning. Against the west wall was the lounge, upholstered in green rep; above it hung the enlarged pictures of my mother and her brother, the only children of Grandma and Grandpa Colver who had lost these two children several years before and now had only seven grandchildren to comfort them in their declining years.

"On the center table was a fruit dish filled with choice apples from the family orchard. The weekly Ashland Tidings came regularly, Grandma subscribed for The Ladies Home Journal for me and these about took care of our reading material.

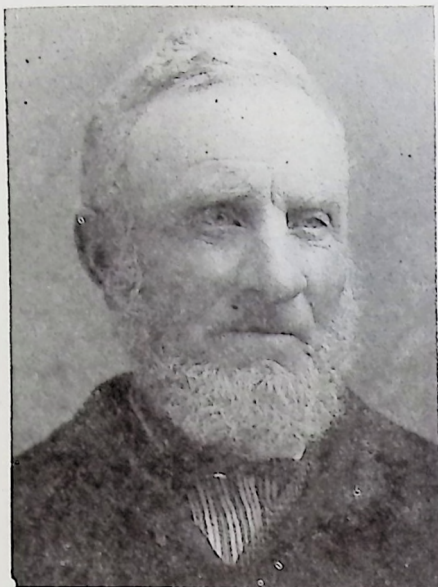
"Then, the Christmas celebrations at Grandma Colver's! The picture that stands out foremost in my mind is that of the tree itself as it stood in the bedroom north of the dining room. This Christmas tree, as I recall it, was surely more perfect in shape than any of our trees today. The limbs seem to have been the same length from floor to ceiling—probably the tree had been topped—and then, of course, due allowance must be made for the fact that I am now seeing it through the glass of time.

"For Christmas decorations, there was an abundance of mistletoe to be had fresh from the oak trees. Sacks

made of mosquito netting and sewed with red yarn were filled with candy, nuts and oranges and hung from the limbs. Christmas cards, dolls and mysterious packages were tied to the tree. Lighted candles were on the tip of each limb from floor to ceiling and there were cookies tied with red ribbons, strings of popcorn and other strings made of our own lovely red madrone berries which grew in such abundance around Phoenix. Gold and silver tinsel also helped to make this

wonderful tree a thing of beauty to the eager, waiting children.

"The most beautiful picture in my memory is of the old house as it looked on a May day, about 1890. The orchard was in full bloom, the lilacs were in bloom, the roses were unfolding their petals and the locust and tamarack trees were in blossom. I shall never again see such beauty and smell such fragrance as surrounded this old home at that time."



Samuel Colver

UNCLE SAM AND AUNT HULDAH

Phoenix was built on Sam Colver's Donation Land Claim and it may be of interest to this generation to know something about him and his family.

Sam Colver was born in 1815. When a young man, he and his brother, Hiram, studied law at Plymouth college, but Sam wrote a funny poem about a teacher and he was told to apologize in public or be expelled. He went to Texas instead.

Sam fought with Sam Houston in the war with Mexico and he was in the battle of the San Jacinto River when



Huldah Callander Colver

the Texans beat Santa Anna. After the war, he stayed on and scouted and traded with the Indians for a while before going back to the farm in Ohio.

He didn't stay home long. Young Sam Colver and a man called Old Buchanan went on a lecture tour and they did tricks of mindreading and hypnotism.

He married in 1845—he'd met pretty Huldah Callander. Her parents had died when she was little and a family named Baldwin took her. As nobody could remember her exact birthday, it was guessed at January 1, 1823. Mrs. Baldwin taught her to be an excellent housekeeper, but she always said of the

energetic Huldah, "If there's an easy or a hard way of doing anything, she'll always do it the hard way."

Sam brought his bride home and they lived with his parents, Samuel Colver Senior and Rachel Curry Colver, and with Hiram and his wife, Maria.

Their son, Lewellyn, was born in 1847 and Isabel came in 1850, while they were waiting at the rendezvous at Independence, Missouri, on their way to Oregon.

After they reached the Willamette valley, Sam and Hiram Colver left their families with relatives on Silver Creek. The two brothers roamed all over Oregon and newspapers of the time tell of their comings and goings. Sam helped take the first census and Hiram practiced law.

In 1851, both brothers took up their land claims where Phoenix is now. Sam was Indian Agent at Port Orford and then he was agent in the Rogue River valley in 1853 and 1854. Hiram took care of their land and Sam spent most of his time at Fort Lane, on the reservation or in distant parts of his district. He worried about the Indians, patched up their quarrels, tried to teach them farming white-man-fashion, wrote letters to the superintendent and finally paid for a lot of things for them out of his own pocket.

In 1855 Sam Colver built the big house in Phoenix and settled down to farming. Hiram died two years later.

By the time the census taker came around in Jackson County in 1855, Samuel Colver Senior and his wife, Rachel, had followed their children to Phoenix. Rachel didn't like Oregon and hadn't wanted to come. Her views about coming west were definitely stated in one line of a poem she wrote on the subject: "I will go to California and there find my grave."

Sam's mother never did reconcile herself. She used to walk up and down the porch and recite, as a reminder:

I walk with myself
And I talk with myself
And myself says unto me

Beware of thyself
Take care of thyself
For nobody cares for thee

In 1860, Sam Colver went east again to sell some land he owned in Texas, talk for the transcontinental railroad and buy some fine horses.

Sam brought the horses and some mules west, but he didn't stay home very long. He ran stock in the Waldo Hills and a pack and saddle train to the northern mines.

He had helped form the Oregon Republican party and during the Civil War was a strong Union man. While his son, Louie, was in the army at Fort Klamath, Sam stayed home and took care of the farm at Phoenix.

After the war, Louie took up land east of the mountains with Orsen Stearns, but he was only twenty and the country was too full of mosquitos and too far away from the girls to suit him. Sam took over Louie's interest and began spending more and more of his time in Klamath County.

Orsen Stearns told the following story about Sam Colver:

"In trade, he was always ready to ask a good price and collect it, too, and yet in trade he would be extremely liberal and generous at times. During the years when his son and I were in partnership, with his horses, we had the privilege of the use of any of his young horses if we could break them.

"I had picked out a young horse that I thought would make a good saddle horse, had broken it well, and I had tried to buy it of him, but he asked me \$125, which I thought was \$50 too much, and I refused to buy.

"Shortly after, I had ridden the horse over to Phoenix, and, while at his home, some parties came there and were looking over his horses, asking him prices on different ones, when Colver pointed out the horse I was riding and says, 'There is one of my horses that this man has just broken.'

"The man looked the horse over, and says, 'What will you take for him?'

"Colver turned to me and says, 'That horse is worth \$75, isn't he, Orsen?'

"I said, 'I guess he is.'

"And he would have taken \$75 for him, when he had asked \$125 for him a short time before. That was the way

with him. He had no set prices, but it varied according to how he felt at the time."

Sam's daughter, Isabel, or Belle, was called "the belle of the Rogue River valley". In the picture Peter Britt took shortly after her marriage, her dark hair is parted in the middle and neat curls hang down on each side of her face. She was a pretty girl. At one time she was engaged to Sylvester Rice and her mother was terribly disappointed when she broke it off with only the excuse, "I'd be in the house rocking the cradle while he was outside counting the stars." In 1871, Isabel married Al Rose, Mrs. Emmerson E. Gore's eldest son, and they were very happy.

On the last day of the year 1874, Louie married Jemima ("Mime") Dollarhyde.

Sam Colver was always lecturing on temperance, women's rights, the swamp land laws or some other subject he was interested in. He wrote home to Huldah about two lectures he had given:

Link River, January 23, 1871
Dear Huldah this date finds me in good Health . . . Spent Christmas and New Years at Yreka. Attended the Christmas Festival and Ball. the first being a grand entertainment for the School Children of Yreka in which some quite old scholars to an active part, the Ball was well patronized and much enjoyed by the guests, the proceeds of the Ball Supper went to the Church and they feasted and danced all night for Christs Sake, I was . . . given a free pass to this as well as to the other Entertainments of the city: On the 27th I lectured at the Notron Theater, dividing the time with the Minstrell Troupe performing there, had a Crowded House, and a jolly time: gave them a Local Song touching up the Evanjelical Alliance between the Church and Ball Room for Raising Revenue.

Left Yreka for Breur Springs found the Stock doing well and no immediate necessity for feeding and so I left for the Fort. Stopped at the Lower Agency. Stayed three days, visited the Fort. Stopped with Capt Goodale was feasted on Ice Cream and Cak in Aristocratic style . . .

I left the Agency the next morning in Company with Ivan [Applegate] for Yanax. Stayed two days. Saw a dusky Maid and her sable affinity joined in bonds of holy matrimony under Boston law, the Sub Agent Tying the Knot in style with appropriate Ceremony. We ware all invited to the wedding by the Principal Chiefs. The Ceremonies ware Creditable and Compare favorably with our more advanced Civilization.

Left the Agency, passing through Langel Valley and am now at Link River. Lectured at here last night. Had a Housefull of Men but no Women. Shall leave for Breur Springs Tomorrow Write to me on receipt of this. My love to all, reserving a share for yourself.

S. Colver

Sam Colver, the agnostic, indulged his wife; she liked to have ministers for supper and Sam made them welcome. Huldah's world was her home—Sam only wanted a home to come back to. They both loved and worried about their children.

In March, 1884, Louie was accidentally shot and killed by a neighbor in Phoenix.

Sam was away more than ever after his son died, but by this time he was seventy years old. He wrote home to Huldah on New Year's Day, 1885:

Dear Huldah this date finds me well but some what weather worn — , was delayed — by Storms and Mud ten days in Shasty Valley. Shall Start for Home in a bout a week have not seen Browns folks yet Shall go thare tomorrow on my way to Linkville —if anybody wants to hall Freight from Rogue River to Linkville at any price they can have the job. for I don't want any of it in mine.

I intended to be with you all the Spend Christmas & Newyears. But Storms and Mud, ware omnipotent. And so, I submitted to the inevitable with as much patience as possible, hoping for a change of luck some time in the new year of 1885. and remain

Yours Sam Colver

Isabel died of diptheria in that year of 1885 and the house that Sam had given Isabel and Al Rose burned in

1886. Al brought the four children to live in the Colver home and, the year after that, Al Rose and the widowed Jemima Dollarhyde Colver were married.

The Colver house was full of grandchildren for Huldah, but Sam found that

his business took him away from Phoenix oftener than ever. In February of 1891, Sam Colver was lost in a storm in Klamath County. Huldah Colver lived on in Phoenix. She died in 1907 and there are still a few people left who remember her.

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